

Southern California Association of Governments

# SCAG Communications Strategy 2005 – 2006



# CONTENTS

## COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Message   | 1 |
| Execution | 2 |

## TARGET AUDIENCES 3

## STRATEGIES & TACTICS

|                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Members                             | 4-6   |
| Member Jurisdictions & Stakeholders | 7-9   |
| Community Organizations             | 10    |
| Legislators                         | 11    |
| News Media                          | 12-13 |
| Crisis Communications               | 14    |

# COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

---

## MESSAGE

- Establish and effectively communicate the importance of regional cooperation and of employing regional solutions to Southern California's many policy challenges.
- Establish SCAG's responsibility and leadership in resolving regional challenges. Foster a uniform message of SCAG regional cooperation, consensus building, and problem solving.
- Reinforce SCAG's brand and image, and strategically position and brand specific SCAG initiatives and projects when such actions will enhance their understandability and recognition.
- Establish clarity and consistency in the delivery of policy and program issue messages.

# COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

---

## EXECUTION

- Improve communications with the Regional Council, Policy Committees, member local governments, subregions and other key stakeholder audiences.
- Enable members to effectively communicate the program and policy messages of SCAG to their elected colleagues and constituents by providing them with adequate information and training.
- Assure that multifaceted communications efforts are totally integrated, cost-effective, and consistent.
- Enhance SCAG's profile with the news media and others who influence and shape policies that affect the Southern California region.
- Increase the visibility of SCAG's policy experts, resources, services, and initiatives.
- Satisfy the public outreach and participation requirements of major SCAG planning efforts, including *Destination 2030* (the 2004 RTP) and the *Compass 2% Strategy*.
- Improve SCAG Web Site interface to encourage public education and feedback.

# TARGET AUDIENCES

---

## **Members**

Regional Council and Policy Committee members. Other elected officials from member jurisdictions: Boards of Supervisors, City Councils, Native American Tribal Councils

## **Member Jurisdictions**

City Managers, County Administrators, Subregional Coordinators, Task Force members, state and regional agencies and key staff

## **Stakeholder Organizations**

Environmental, academic, and business groups

## **Community and Environmental Justice Audiences**

Civic, minority, and ethnic organizations, labor and faith-based organizations, local government entities

## **Legislators**

State Legislators, Members of Congress and key federal and state legislative staff

## **Trade Associations/Affiliate Organizations**

League of California Cities, CSAC, AMPO, NARC, CALCOG

## **News Media**

National and regional media outlets, including Washington, D.C and Sacramento bureaus

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBERS

Provide members with comprehensive information and training about SCAG's regional issues, priorities and goals so that they are better equipped to communicate the value of SCAG and its programs and planning efforts to other audiences.

### ■ **Conduct new member Briefings/Orientations**

"Package" materials used to orient new members of the Regional Council. Items to include:

- "Your Guide to SCAG" Brochure and business card CD
- SCAG Member Handbook
- SCAG Member Benefits Brochure
- Legislative Reference Guide
- SCAG Region Pocket Guide
- Key Message Flash Cards
- CD of major policy/initiative presentations

### ■ **Subregional Policy & Issue Briefings**

Program and schedule regular informational briefings in every subregion and solicit member views and opinions.

### ■ **Provide Media Training**

Conduct half-day media workshops offering in-depth, one-on-one media and message training on effective media interview techniques. Provide participants with tools defining media "dos and don'ts."

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBERS

### ■ Utilize e-mail to distribute timely information:

- monthly “eVision” electronic newsletter
- “Gov Affairs” legislative newsletter
- updates on urgent regional governance developments
- meeting agendas and “Save-the-Date” notices
- summaries of major actions taken by SCAG’s Regional Council and Policy Committees.

Establish dissemination protocols and regularly update and expand distribution lists.

### ■ Distribute regional policy Fact Sheets

Provide regularly updated fact sheets and brochures on SCAG’s responsibilities and achievements, program platforms, and policy positions, including:

- Overview of SCAG
- Regional Transportation Plan
- Transportation Finance
- Aviation Planning
- Goods Movement
- COMPASS 2% Strategy
- Housing Planning
- California Maglev
- Environmental Justice
- RTP Environmental Impact Report

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBERS

### ■ Provide access to “Members Only” section of SCAG’s Web Site

Provide “Value-Added” services and resources to SCAG members, accessible with a designated password.

### ■ Make presentations available

Provide visually rich, annotated, easy-to-deliver PowerPoint presentations on regional issues, priorities and goals, as well as SCAG’s responsibilities and achievements:

- Overview of SCAG
- State of the Region
- *Destination 2030*
- COMPASS 2% Strategy
- Goods Movement Strategy

When possible, incorporate customized information to increase relevancy to individual regions and audiences.

### ■ Make speakers available

Maintain a speaker’s bureau able and trained to make presentations on various topics. Invite Regional Council members to augment bureau program efforts.



# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBER JURISDICTIONS & STAKEHOLDERS

Aggressively pursue presentation opportunities in each subregion. Develop materials in addition to those previously identified to assist in communicating with political, business, community and other stakeholder audiences, including:

### Communications Materials

#### ■ Information Services Brochure

A brochure detailing SCAG's various data, GIS mapping, forecasting, and other information services available from SCAG.

#### ■ Transportation Financing Brochure

A brochure identifying the sources and channels for transportation financing in the SCAG region. A major section will be devoted to innovative public/private financing strategies.

### Displays

Continue to improve the form and function of SCAG display materials for conferences, forums, workshops and other public events. Ensure they serve as cost-effective outreach vehicles providing concise and understandable messages about SCAG's mission, goals and initiatives.

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBER JURISDICTIONS & STAKEHOLDERS

### Conferences/Workshops

Increase stakeholder participation by following the guidelines and timelines presented in the “ SCAG Event and Conference Planner” and:

- developing strong program content and concomitant participation.
- thematically and graphically presenting the event to attract stakeholder interest.
- utilizing regional venues and reaching out to local elected officials for support.
- conducting pre-event publicity, on-site media relations and post-event media outreach.

### Special Events

Events planned during the current fiscal year include:

- Southwest Compact Conference – Sept. 2005
- Tribal Government Summit – Fall 2005
- State of the Region Press Conf. – January, 2006
- SCAG Regional Economic Forecast Conference – January 2006
- SCAG Regional Housing Summit – Spring 2006
- SCAG General Assembly – May 2006
- SCAG Regional Council Retreat – June 2006

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH MEMBER JURISDICTIONS & STAKEHOLDERS

### **Special SCAG 40th Anniversary Activities**

Extend the festivities and activities of SCAG's 40th Anniversary Celebration at the Los Angeles Athletic Club in May 2005 to individual member counties and to other audiences. Provide recognition to staff and members for the many efforts and contributions made toward the achievement of SCAG's mission of leadership, vision and progress.

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH COMMUNITY/ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AUDIENCES

### ■ Meetings and Presentations

Schedule a minimum of 12 presentations each year delivered by members and staff leadership to business groups, civic organizations, organizations that represent minorities, labor organizations, faith-based organizations, environmental groups, academic groups and local government agencies .

### ■ Public Participation

Provide both paper and web-based public feedback forms. Create and monitor a suitable Internet interface to encourage public education and feedback on planning efforts. Review and update contact databases.

### ■ Scheduling and Documentation

Create a main log of outreach activities to document efforts and ensure the broadest level of outreach without overlapping efforts. Expand the current EJ database with the help of EJ Advisory Groups.

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH LEGISLATORS

### ■ Regular Briefing Sessions

Schedule regular briefing sessions with members of Congress and state legislators throughout the region to increase the lawmaker's understanding on the agency's mission and goals. While it is important to conduct briefings with every federal and state lawmaker in the region, priority will be given to members in leadership positions or who sit on key policy committees of importance to the agency. Both geography and legislative strategy will be considered.

### ■ Member Trips to Washington, D.C. and Sacramento

Schedule member trips to Washington, D.C. and Sacramento during legislative sessions.

### ■ Coalitions and non-member “Key Contacts”

Create a coalitions and non-member “Key Contacts” to communicate SCAG initiatives and positions to lawmakers

### ■ Workshops

Host periodic workshops for new legislative staff members to provide them with an overall orientation on the role and initiatives of SCAG.

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

### ■ **News Releases/Advisories/Media Tip Sheets/News Conferences**

Work with the Communications Task Force and individual Regional Council members to identify the specific issues, initiatives and activities that should receive the attention of the news media. Use telephone, e-mail and faxed messages to increase and enhance positive coverage by the news media of SCAG events and meetings.

Additionally, target weekly papers with a special community focus.

### ■ **Editorial Board Meetings**

Schedule, at a minimum, six separate editorial board meetings with key print and broadcast organizations that cover the SCAG region. Prepare “talking points” for each meeting and arrange for the participation of Regional Council members residing in the media market.

### ■ **Letters to the Editor**

Compose and customize letters to be sent out quarterly by Regional Council members.

### ■ **Trained Spokespersons**

Identify and provide training to a minimum of 15 Regional Council members to serve as effective agency spokespersons. Prepare message points for their use.

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

### ■ Member Communications with News Media

Provide members with current “sound-bite” commentary on topical news items via e-mail. Simultaneously, the “sound-bites” will be formatted, packaged and distributed via e-mail to the press. When posed with questions, members will be prepared to respond with the 2-3 sentence “sound-bites,” and be recognized as knowledgeable and responsive spokespersons on the issues affecting Southern California.

### ■ Member On-Air Interviews and Talk Show Opportunities

Pursue and schedule, at a minimum, ten radio and/or television interviews for Regional Council members on various public affairs shows broadcast throughout the Southern California region. Programs to be targeted include:

- Life and Times (KCET-TV)
- Week in Review (Adelphia)
- Eye on LA (KABC-TV)
- Midday Sunday (KTTV - FOX11)
- Pacesetters (KTLA-TV)
- Which Way LA (KCRW-FM)
- Airtalk (KPCC-FM)
- The Michael Jackson Show (KRLA-AM)
- Community Bulletin (KWRM-AM)
- Community Forum (KUOR-FM)
- Community Spotlight (KGGI-FM)
- City Scope (KOST-FM)
- LA Speaks Out (KJLH-FM)

# STRATEGIES & TACTICS

---

## CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

### ■ Formal Program

Develop and maintain a crisis communications program that includes and continuously updates:

- Identification of potential crisis communications situations
- Statements for external and internal use
- Spokespersons and processes for transmitting messages
- Training of key staff and Regional Council Members in crisis communications techniques

## INTERNAL PROTOCOL

### ■ Internal Editorial Board

- Establish an Internal Editorial Board that meets on a regular basis to develop new ideas for potential media angles.
- Present suggestions and recommendations of the Internal Editorial Board to SCAG Directors on a regular basis.





## *Resolving Regional Challenges*

Southern California Association of Governments

818 West Seventh Street, 12th Floor • Los Angeles, California 90017-3435

t (213) 236-1800 • f (213) 236-1825 • [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov)

1898 9.05